

S E C R E T

NIO-0227-76

10 February 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR : D/DCI/NIO

SUBJECT : Re-establishment of a CIA SIGINT Advisory Group

1. My job of getting two Pilot Collection Projects covering (KIQs 9, 10 & 20) off the ground has brought me into close contact with the collectors and users of SIGINT. Proximity to CIA's SIGINT effort and exposure to the DCI's community role, as seen at recent EXCOM and USIB meetings, convinces me that the DCI could profit from the availability of a CIA SIGINT Advisory Group under the chairmanship of the DDI (now the CIA SIGINT Officer) and made up of the Director, OEL, Director, OWI, Chief, [redacted], the DDS&T or the ADDS&T and the Chief of the Collection Guidance Staff. 25X

2. The SIGINT Advisory Group could meet on an ad hoc basis. Its responsibility would be to advise the DCI on all SIGINT matters involving the CIA and to prepare an overall CIA SIGINT plan for the DCI's approval. I believe the following advantages would result from the re-establishment of a CIA SIGINT Advisory Group:

a. The DCI would be better informed regarding CIA's SIGINT activities and the interrelationship of our SIGINT activities with the National SIGINT Plan.

b. The drafting of a CIA SIGINT Plan would assist the resource management process during the annual budget preparation period.

There does not appear to be any significant disadvantage.

3. I have discussed this proposal with the ADDS&T, Dr. Sayre Stevens, Mr. James Hirsch, Director, Office of ELINT/DDS&T, Mr. Zellmer, Director, Office of Weapons Intelligence/DDS&T, [redacted] Acting Chief of 25X1A 25X

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[redacted] the DDI's Assistant in his role as CIA's SIGINT officer, and with Mr. Ed Proctor. With the exception of Mr. Proctor, the people approached were enthusiastic in their willingness to actively participate in a CIA SIGINT Advisory Group. Mr. Proctor has some doubts about the desirability of writing a comprehensive SIGINT Plan and of assuming a more active role in his function as CIA's SIGINT Officer. Mr. Proctor gave me some invaluable background reading on the History of SIGINT in the CIA, and his knowledge of the tangled bureaucratic web associated with our past and present SIGINT activity is essential to the successful functioning of a SIGINT Advisory Group.

[redacted]  
NIO for Special Activities

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Remarks:				
Hank:				
Attached is <input type="text"/> memorandum on SIGINT matters, which I mentioned to you and which I think merits your attention.				
<input type="text"/> <i>Just for the mill.</i> <i>What is the "background" referred to in the last para?</i> <i>Suggest you have a chat with [redacted]</i>				
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MEMORANDUM FOR:D/DCI/NIO

[REDACTED]

Here is the SIGINT memo we talked about yesterday. You might consider putting an NIO rep on a newly-constituted SIGINT Advisory Group.

[REDACTED]

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Our SIGINT resources have grown over the years both as a consequence of inflation and as a reflection of real needs for raw and processed data, especially in the ELINT field. However, it can also be said that we have accreted to ourselves functions and responsibilities simply because we have always believed that we can do a better job than anyone else. And in the end, history rather than conscious organization has dictated the way we split up the SIGINT pie internally.

There is little need to belabor the past, however. What is important today is that SIGINT has come to play a real part in the way CIA does business. It is furthermore clear that CIA SIGINT is involved one way or the other, often in a symbiotic relationship, with operations, with processing, with R&D and finally with the ultimate reason for our existence, production and analysis. The symbiosis is particularly clear in the world of science and technology, where analysts from OWI and processors from OEL work shoulder-to-shoulder on a difficult [REDACTED] problem, where analysts and processors are regularly assigned

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[REDACTED] and in the R&D world where former analysts from OSI and OWI are deeply involved in the technology and management of R&D.

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This is an exciting world and one through which such interchanges the imagination and interest of top-flight contributors to the intelligence process are stimulated. In fact, the Director of OWI, for example, is convinced that he would lose some of his best analysts were this exchange process interrupted.

There is another side, too, which is not always clearly understood. The conduct of a SIGINT program whatever its size or shape requires people experienced in the discipline. You cannot operate effectively without experience gained by regular participation in the many facets of the SIGINT world. This is why some contractors in the SIGINT business such as  25X1A  
 are so successful; they make sure they engage not just in hardware development but also in the building of collection sites, and the processing and analysis of data. This gives them a competitive edge over others who stick strictly to hardware.

From the above discussion it should be apparent that CIA must preserve some hand in all of these areas if it is to continue to be effective in the SIGINT area. Of course, not engaging in R&D, collection and processing does not mean that weapons analysis would cease, but only that it would suffer

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both in timeliness and quality. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We could always muddle along;

however, our ability to react quickly and decisively to a new and unusual collection opportunities would be seriously degraded. Nor can we expect NSA, bowed down by its requirement to serve the military services, help us out with what is comparatively "small peanuts."

The question is then: How do we go about defining a CIA SIGINT mission that Congress tells us must be less all encompassing than today's without jeopardizing the relationships described briefly above?

We can try a zero-base approach dealing with concepts instead of resources. In other words, we can begin again from the beginning, setting out our most basic needs for SIGINT in support of CIA operations and production. We then set down the basic processing requirements for the analytic effort and what should be the minimum collection effort to support a limited but realistic training ground for processors and analysts.

We must also estimate what clandestine collection effort we can see ourselves mounting over the next few years and what basic training grounds are required for this, and we must look

at our operational support requirements downstream and relate these to what may be the accompanying requirements for processing and analysis. Finally, this minimum operational support program must be given the R&D necessary to provide it collection and processing equipment and analytical aids.

The result should be a rock-hard minimum SIGINT mission for the Agency which all concerned can agree with and easily justify. Around this core can then be built an additional layer of things the Agency feels it really would like to do and, perhaps later, those which either by agreement with NSA or by <sup>can</sup> CFI directive the Agency must do. This "deck" of mission concepts can then be put in priority order, tested against requirements, and reduced as necessary by dropping the lower priority items off the bottom.

Once we have the cored mission and an acceptable set of additional concepts, this overall "CIA SIGINT Mission" can be transformed into packages of resources consisting of the money and positions necessary to do the job. These packages can then be subjected to zero-based resource review, with the result that some packages may be dropped as being too expensive for their resultant contribution to the mission.



Finally, from the resource packages one can build from ground-zero the organization necessary to carry-out the CIA mission. With mission, resources, and organization firmly in hand we will then be in a stronger position for realistic planning and justification of the CIA SIGINT effort to Congress and OMB.

23 June 76

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Remarks: Hank:			
<p>I have tried, in the attached, to come to grips with the problem of arriving at a "CIA SIGINT Mission". You may want to glance through this at your leisure.</p> <p><i>This looks good to me and its thrust can be included in the rewrite of Jack your charge. I have changed one word -- on P.4</i></p>			
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